

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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P R 150953Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2254

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 4738

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, RP, US

SUBJ: PRESIDENT MARCOS ANNOUNCES REVIEW OF US/RP DEFENSE RELATIONS

REF: A) MANILA 4661; B) MANILA 4707

1. DURING CONCISE ADDRESS TO STUDENTS OF PHILIPPINE DEFENSE COLLEGE APRIL 15 AT MALACANANG, PRESIDENT MARCOS STATED THAT US/PHILIPPINE DEFENSIVE RELATIONSHIPS WERE UNDER REVIEW AND THAT HE WOULD MAKE A MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENT IN THE NEXT TWO OR THREE DAYS. WHILE THE QUOTE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP UNQUOTE HAD ENDED WITH RAISING OF THE PHILIPPINE FLAG IN 1946, TIES WITH THE UNITED STATES ALWAYS HAD BEEN CLOSE. THE PHILIPPINES UNDERSTOOD THE UNITED STATES BETTER THAN OTHER POWERS AND UP TO NOW HAD BEEN ABLE TO TELL WHAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD DO. TODAY, HOWEVER, QUOTE IN THE FACE OF THE DEBACLE OCCURRING IN INDOCHINA, UNQUOTE IT WAS NECESSARY TO REVIEW THE RELATIONSHIP.

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2. MARCOS NOTED THAT THROUGHOUT HIS TIME IN OFFICE THE RELATIONSHIP HAD BEEN AN EVOLVING ONE. IN 1966, DURING HIS VISIT TO THE U.S., HE HAD SOUGHT A CHANGE IN TENURE OF THE BASES AGREEMENT FROM 99 YEARS TO 25 YEARS. 10,000 HECTARES OF CLARK LAND HAD BEEN RETURNED TO THE PHILIPPINE ALONG WITH 400 HECTARES OF CAMP JOHN HAY. SANGLEY POINT HAD BEEN RETURNED AS WELL AS OTHER PARCELS OF BASE LAND.

3. THE QUESTION NOW, HE SAID, WAS WHAT PURPOSE THE BASES SERVED. COULD THEY BE COUNTED UPON TO PROTECT THE PHILIPPINES? IT WAS UNFORTUNATE TO HAVE TO BRING THIS QUESTION UP IN A TIME OF DIFFICULTY FOR THE U.S., BUT IT WAS VERY NECESSARY TO HIS COUNTRY'S SECURITY.

4. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE WAS NOT ASKING FOR ANY HELP ON INTERNAL MATTERS. HE HAD NEVER ASKED FOR THE AID OF FOREIGN TROOPS AND HE WOULD NOT DO SO. HOWEVER, AGREEMENTS WITH THE UNITED STATES HAD BEEN ENTERED INTO AS SOLEMN UNDERTAKINGS, AND HAD BEEN DULY RATIFIED BY RESPECTIVE CONGRESSES. WHILE HE MUCH APPRECIATED THE SPECIAL PLACE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE U.S. SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE ASSIGNED TO THE PHILIPPINES, (REFERRING TO SENATOR SPARKMAN'S RECENT COMMENT) IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES THAT WAS NOT ENOUGH. RATHER, HE CONCLUDED, IT WAS NECESSARY IN THE CONTEXT OF SEATO AND OF ASEAN RELATIONSHIPS TO PUT ASIDE TRADITIONAL AMENITIES AND, NOTWITHSTANDING THE HISTORY OF SPECIAL TIES, TO LOOK AT RELATIONS IN THE LIGHT OF THE PRESENT NEEDS OF THE UNITED STATES AND OF THE PHILIPPINES.

5. COMMENT. THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS WERE DELIVERED IN A MEASURED, CAREFUL AND SYMPATHETIC TONE. HE OBVIOUSLY HAD REHEARSED THE STATEMENT CAREFULLY IN HIS MIND, AND THERE WERE FEW OF THE AUDIBLE PAUSES THAT OFTEN MARK HIS STYLE. HE DID NOT ELABORATE ON HIS ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE WOULD MAKE A MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENT IN THE NEXT TWO OR THREE DAYS, NOR DID HE REPEAT HIMSELF EXCEPT TO STRESS THAT THE REVIEW MUST INVOLVE A CONSIDERED AND UNEMOTIONAL APPRAISAL OF EACH COUNTRY'S NEEDS.

6. REMARKS OVERHEARD BY ECONOMIC COUNSELOR WHO HAPPENED TO BE CONFIDENTIAL

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AT MALACANANG FOR ANOTHER EVENT. ALTHOUGH TV CAMERAS WERE OPERATING THROUGHOUT, REMARKS HAVE NOT YET BEEN GIVEN PUBLICITY AND WE ARE NOT CERTAIN THEY WILL BE USED. PRESIDENT REPORTEDLY UNAWARE OF PRESENCE OF AMERICAN OBSERVER.

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